

Picture of Mattakeeset Hall :

One of the early buildings in
the town that was used by Catholics for their services.

Today the Hall has been bought by a family
for use in the summer.

Check what the name Mattakeeset is ?

DUXBURY 1840

(Continued from Page 8)

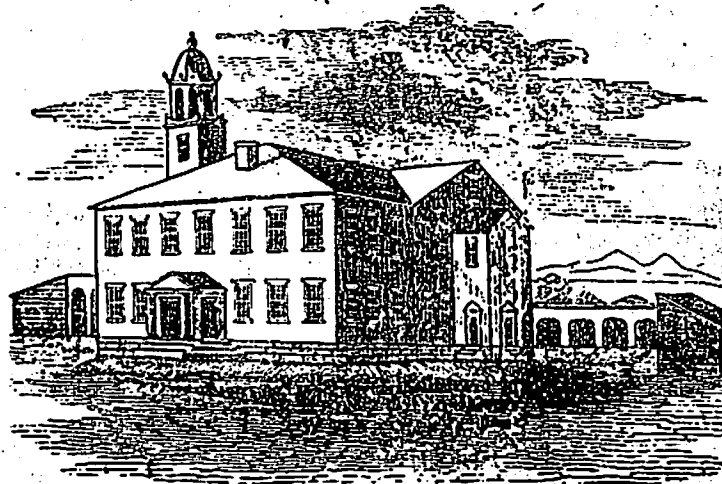
people, engaged couples, and young men from Boston and other places who had heard of or met some of the Duxbury girls. That was on Friday night and on Saturday was the big picnic to Brant Rock. There was but one house there then, an old-fashioned farm house not far from the rock. All sorts of vehicles were put in commission and young people and old went to that. We had clams and fish-chowder, fried fish right out of the water, lobster, huckleberry pies and cake, and many other good things, but we noticed the chowder was served in large white bowls very like the wash-bowls upstairs! On Sunday the big church was full. After the service the vestibule was like a reception, people greeting and parting, as most of them left the next day, though a few stayed on to enjoy the warm, hazy days of early fall.

Characters

There were many peculiar people in town, real characters, about whom one might have written tales equal to some of Miss Wilkins' funny but pathetic stories of country people. There was Mary Ann Alden, a direct descendant from John and Priscilla, who sat in a north "wing pew" at the church and during the long sermon of Mr. Moore, watched out for all the young people and visitors in town and made her peculiar and cutting remarks about them afterwards.

Lois Brewster, in one of the south wing pews, made her observations also, and at one time when there were 3 new engagements in our set, hurried down the church steps and tapped me on the shoulder, saying, "I like the look of your young man best of them all."

Bidley Soule, a giant of a man in size, slouching, but with keen



VIEW OF THE OLD UNITARIAN CHURCH, IN DUXBURY.

on his mother's grave-stone "The chisel can't help her."

In the winter we returned the visits of our relatives and friends and got our taste of life in the city and suburbs, our first acquaintance with the theatre, opera, concerts, etc.

Once on coming home in the spring we left Boston on the 6th or 8th of April just as it was beginning to snow. When we got to Kingston only the mail carriage with one horse was there to meet the train as the storm was so bad. With some difficulty we got as far as Hall's Corner, when the driver said he could take us no further as the drifts were so deep between there and the village, so we had to spend the night at Charles Soule's at the corner.

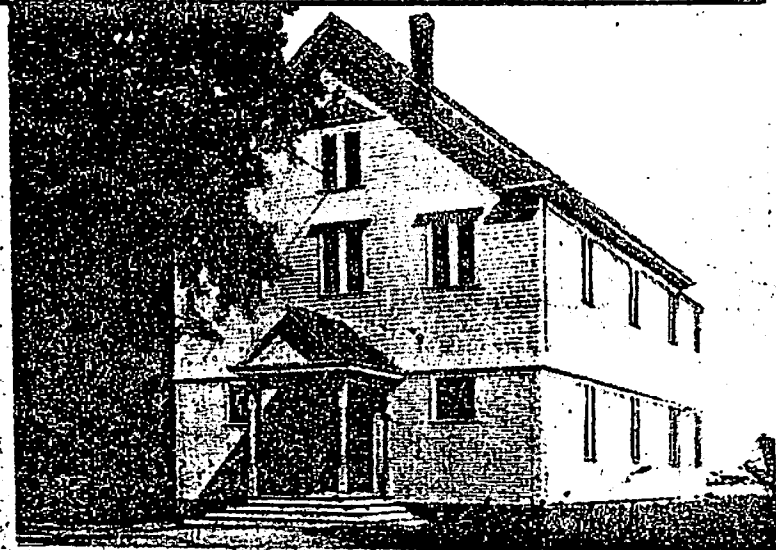
Skating Popular

The Point boys skated on a pond at the Eagle Tree, since called Wright's Pond. If any girls attempted it with their brothers' skates they were called tom-boys. But they slid on the ice and went coasting on sleds. The sleighs went jingling about, and once in the winter, usually, a big sleigh-ride was gotten up to go to Cohasset or Hingham and have a supper. They went in a big

about 20 people. They chose a moonlight night, danced after supper, and came home long after midnight, waking up people along the road with their singing and jingling of the sleigh-bells. There were no houses on what is now the Standish Shore, the last house being Marshall Soule's, later known as Mrs. Lyman Drew's.

As each set of young people grew up the summers were kept lively and enough people lived here the whole year to make some sociability in the winter time. It was in the 70's that the ladies of the Unitarian Society bought a building, Brooks Stable and Express Office, and fitted the lower part for their sewing room with kitchen, etc., and made a hall with a fine floor for dancing upstairs. It was called Duxborough Hall.

They had a janitor and on Saturday nights gave 10 cent parties which were very popular, informal and lively. For some time it was the only hall. The ladies enjoyed their meetings with a luncheon and did good work. But gradually they died or moved away until so few were left the meetings were given-up. A larger hall, Mattakesett, was built for dancing or movies on the



Mattakesett Hall

way generously bought Duxbury Hall and presented it to the Unitarian Society for their Parish House and in the winter months they held services there.

What is now Mrs. Horace Soule's house formerly stood down nearby on the shore, occupied by a Peterson family, and was called Hautboy Castle, though what gave it that name I don't recall. Nathaniel Thayer of Boston, who came with his family one summer to board at the Howard's discovered the sightliness of its present situation and had it moved there, remodelled (piazzas, etc.) in the 70's and occupied it several summers. Then Mr. Train came with his family of lively young people, when tennis was introduced and raged here. The place is still in the Train family, being owned by the youngest daughter.

Duxbury is changed, perhaps for the better. Now it has its Yacht Club, its tennis courts, and its golf links, its tea houses and gift-shops. The roads are good and automobiles fly nither and thither constantly. More and more the old houses are being bought and remodeled and new

every convenience.

The ship-builders and sea captains, the Westons, Frazers, Drews, Sampsons, Winsors, Soules, Winslows, Freemans, Thomases, have passed on. The town is full of new names. Monied men have come here and bought up land and houses, rents are raised so that people of moderate means, who remember the old time charm of its pure air and warm sea bathing, its restful quiet and informality, find it hard to get a place. Circumstances have taken me far from it. To revisit it now I should feel like John Porter who went away when he was 19 and came back after 25-30 years of life in California. When someone asked him if he found many of his old friends and acquaintances, he replied, with tears in his eyes, "I find most of them in the church yard." Yes, the old town has changed -- probably improved -- but in recollection and association it will always be the dearest spot on earth to me. If the time ever comes when the earth sidewalks with grassy edges are replaced by asphalt with stone copings, I am thankful I shall not see it. It is the Old Duxbury I remember and